

## **September 2011 State Employee of the Month**

### ***Bonnie Neal – Department of Mental Health***

Employed with the Department of Mental Health for the past 24 years Bonnie Neal currently serves as the Chief of Children's Community Operations in Kansas City.

After the EF5 tornado devastated the city of Joplin, Missouri Bonnie immediately heeded her instinct to serve and draw upon her training as a Disaster Mental Health Technician and Psychological First Aid Trainer. Ms. Neal arranged her work schedule to allow her to continue to meet the needs of the Southwest Children's Community then left her home and family for six [6] weeks to volunteer in Joplin. While in Joplin Ms. Neal coordinated the on-site trauma response which resulted in many families, children, youth, and adults receiving triage and mental health services including response/medication management and scheduled appointments.

Working closely with the Red Cross during this time as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Bonnie stepped into an extremely hazardous and demanding full-time position working long days and late evenings to coordinate the mental health services. She additionally assisted the Joplin's Mental Health Center (Ozark Center) as their center sustained substantial damage. Through her endeavors she was able to bring in other mental health professionals from across the state to provide much needed assistance.

Without question, Ms. Bonnie Neal is someone to emulate and a valued asset, not only to the Department of Mental Health, but to all Missouri citizens.